

## NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

### Minutes of Meeting

April 26, 2006

A special evening meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held on Wednesday, April 26, 2006, in the Nevada City Council Chambers, 317 Broad Street, Nevada City, CA. The meeting was scheduled for 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Nate Beason, Tim Brady, Patti Ingram, Conley Weaver

Members Absent: Russ Steele, Josh Susman, Robin Sutherland

Staff Present: Dan Landon, Executive Director; Nancy Holman, Administrative Services Officer; Toni Perry, Administrative Assistant

Standing Orders: Chairman Weaver convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission Special Meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

### INFORMATIONAL ITEM

#### 1. Report on Development of the "Regional Map".

Executive Director Landon stated that staff was asked at the February 15, 2006 NCTC Special Meeting to develop a Regional Map, utilizing the criteria that was used to develop the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee (RTMF) Program. NCTC staff collaborated with the Nevada County Department of Transportation and Sanitation (DOTS) staff to create a draft map, which was included in the agenda packets and shown at the meeting. Mr. Landon described the regional criteria for the adopted RTMF utilized to develop the draft map:

- All ramp connections to freeways (SR20/49) or expressways (SR 20) are considered regional.
- Roads functionally classified as arterials, highways, and freeways. Intersections of these facilities with other roads classified as collectors, arterials, highways, and freeways, qualify for RTMF funds.
- Roads or intersections identified as providing regional circulation in city or county general plans and their accompanying Environmental Impact Reports, adopted after passage of AB 1600 ordinance, are considered eligible for RTMF funds.

Mr. Landon explained that the map depicted RTMF eligible roads, State maintained roads, and non-RTMF roads. He said the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is looking at other criteria to further define and refine the map. Commissioners Beason and Brady discussed what criteria might be used to differentiate between regional and local projects. Tim Kiser stated that Grass Valley is including what they consider to be "critical" intersections into the City mitigation fee program, to insure that funds are being collected toward future improvements. He added that some of the projects in the Grass Valley mitigation fee program might be transferred to the RTMF program in the future.

Commissioner Brady stated he appreciated the map and would like to see it include further information regarding traffic volumes and the percentage of regional versus local traffic on the

RTMF roadways. It is his hope that this regional map can be used as a tool to determine whether a project should be regionally or locally funded. Commissioner Beason said he was pleased with the map thus far, and would like to see the TAC expand it to include potential traffic flow and levels of service (LOS).

There was additional discussion regarding ways that the map could be used to determine if projects were eligible for RTMF funding, what information might be shown on the regional map, and how the map might be used to integrate local Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) with the RTMF CIP. An example of the eligibility issue was stated for McCourtney Road from Mill Street to Brighton Street, which is listed as a regional road eligible for RTMF funds, but it is also listed in the Grass Valley CIP as 100% local.

Commissioner Beason asked if there were a consensus to ask the TAC to expand the regional map as proposed. Chairman Weaver said this was a good start and it would be good to add onto it with overlays. Executive Director Landon stated that staff would continue to add information and work on the concepts discussed, and will keep the Commission apprised of progress made on the development of the map.

## ACTION ITEMS

2. Origin and Destination Study, Traffic Modeling, and Mitigation Fee Update: Presentation by Grant Johnson, PRISM Engineering.

Grant Johnson gave background on the development of the traffic model, how it related to the development of the RTMF program, and also how the Origin and Destination (O & D) Study dovetailed with both of those programs. Mr. Johnson explained the tools used for the O & D Study, including the traffic model, and clarified the conclusions reached in that study.

Mr. Johnson stated the only assumption made in the O & D Study was that the weekday and time the study was conducted was a typical rendering of vehicle movement in the County. He said the study is solid data that is not subject to interpretation. He also said that the survey had thousands of samples, with a margin of error of 0.69%. Therefore, when the report stated that 29% of the vehicles that were coming in toward Fee Zone 8 actually ended up in Fee Zone 8, that is a solid number versus an assumption. The results were derived by using the traffic model trip generation, as well as the percentages for how much traffic goes in and out of the area.

Commissioner Brady questioned the use of P.M. Peak Hour trips used in the study versus Average Daily Traffic (ADT). He questioned if the vehicles that were already in Zone 8 when the study was conducted were accounted for, and he is concerned that regional fees are undercollected. Grant Johnson responded that trips going in and out of Fee Zone 8 throughout the day were accounted for in the O & D Study. Mr. Johnson said traffic engineers analyze traffic in the P.M. Peak Hour versus school hours, since the P.M. Peak Hour gets the worst levels of service at the most locations. Commissioner Ingram added that when school is out of session or during the Christmas season you get a different count, so it is necessary to use an average count to determine fee collection. Commissioner Brady questioned if the NCTC should request a review of traffic flow at some of the primary capital improvement areas to see if they have P.M. peaks outside of the 4:00-6:00 p.m. timeframe.

Tim Kiser stated that TischlerBise was hired by the City of Grass Valley to look at the P.M. Peak Hour versus the ADT methodology. They looked at the census data and realized a large portion of the Grass Valley residents travel outside of the city to work. Mr. Kiser said there was a study done

by FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) that looks at this commute trip to and from work, and allows you to adjust some of the factors. Because of that, TischlerBise felt the ADT method was the best way for the City of Grass Valley to address their impact fees.

Grant Johnson said there were several issues going on. One of those was how to decide what needs to be mitigated, and he believes that is done with the P.M. Peak Hour traffic counts. Mr. Johnson said that the mitigations for the P.M. Peak Hour would also work for the noon traffic issues. The other issue going on was how to assign the cost of improvements to everyone. He said that is a subjective question, and everyone is using a different system.

Commissioner Brady feels the current method of calculating mitigation fees for regional residential building in western Nevada County is not sufficient to collect the appropriate amount of funds to build designated capital improvements. Grant Johnson stated that, due to the AB 1600 law, he is constrained because law dictates that you must create a nexus between improvements and who pays for them. You have to figure out where the trips come from and how many are going through the project locations, and assign responsibility. Mr. Johnson reviewed that the City of Grass Valley is basing their fee program on a daily trip generation, which is another methodology for assigning responsibility. He said there is no right or wrong methodology to assess traffic flow, but usually there are other considerations such as demographics, economy, or political reasons, as to why one method might be more attractive over another method.

Commissioner Brady asked how the fees would be impacted if the ADT methodology were to be used in the NCTC model versus the P.M. Peak Hour. Grant Johnson replied he is not sure it would affect the fee. Mr. Landon also spoke on the ADT versus the P.M. Peak Hour methodology, and stated it was roughly a factor of ten trips per day for houses. If you move to an ADT model, you would raise the total number of trips by a factor of ten, but it would not impact the per trip/per unit fee. Grant Johnson said every county he works in has a shortfall, but the larger counties collect money quicker through the huge trip generations so projects are built quicker. In Nevada County the total CIP cost is small and there is a smaller amount of money collected, so money is collected at a slower rate.

Barbara Bashall, Executive Director of the Nevada County Contractors' Association, suggested that further discussion is needed on the cost share between residential versus commercial development. She believes commercial businesses and the jobs they provide are at risk, due to the inequity of fees collected in Zone 8. She is asking the NCTC to look at this perceived imbalance to see if the shares can be distributed more equitably between residential and commercial development.

Executive Director Landon stated that in the existing RTMF program there is a specific number of projects, there is a certain land use for those projects, and a set of assumptions from the forecast. He suggested taking an expanded look at the modeling with the land use, and a fresh look at the assignment of the fees with the number of projects there. Executive Director Landon stated that there are four pieces of data that are being developed in the current model and fee update, which include: 1) The growth rate for assumed land uses. 2) Land use assumptions for the fee area. 3) The issue of assigning fees with geographic parity. 4) The issue of assigning fees between residential and nonresidential land use.

At the conclusion of the dialogue, Commissioner Beason noted that the subject before the Commission was to advise staff whether additional work was needed on the O & D Study. The consensus of the Commissioners seemed to be that no further work was needed.

Commissioner Brady made a motion that the O & D Study is complete and no further study is needed. Commissioner Beason seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Grass Valley Request for "Interim" RTMF Update.

Tim Kiser, Engineer for the City of Grass Valley, gave a presentation on the proposed Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street intersection improvement project. This location currently functions at a LOS F during peak hour times. One of the solutions being considered is a single lane roundabout, with a bypass lane on the westbound portion. Mr. Kiser reported that this project was included in NCTC's 2001 RTMF program. Due to the substandard weave for the onramp and the offramp, numerous conceptual projects have been evaluated but rejected, due to their impact to the weave.

Mr. Kiser reported that the City Council of Grass Valley has approved the improvement project and gave staff direction on March 14<sup>th</sup> to solicit professional services to design a single-lane roundabout for this intersection. Subsequently an RFP was sent out on March 29<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Kiser said Caltrans reviewed the proposed roundabout and accepted the initial traffic analysis. Caltrans views this proposal as the only option that will not adversely affect the weave, other than the \$15-20 million improvement proposed previously as the Grass Valley Corridor Improvement Project (GVCIP). Grass Valley staff plans to award the project to an engineering firm by the May 23<sup>rd</sup> City Council meeting. Completion of preliminary engineering is proposed by the fall of 2006, the environmental process should be completed by the winter of 2006, and the final design completed by the summer of 2007. Mr. Kiser said City staff is working to develop a funding plan to keep the project on schedule, until the RTMF can be revised or updated to reflect the current cost. The current project cost is estimated at \$1.471 million, and the City has \$781,000 in City regional traffic fees collected prior to the implementation of the RTMF, with the current RTMF listing \$500,000 of the fees as identified for this project. Mr. Kiser stated the City is proposing an interim funding plan for this project by obligating the \$781,000 toward the project, and establishing a loan for the remaining \$690,000 from the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) funds or another City identified funding source. Their proposal is that the loan amount would be reimbursed from future RTMF funds generated from the updated fee program. Tim Kiser concluded his presentation by noting that the City of Grass Valley is requesting NCTC to revise the previous project description for the Idaho-Maryland/East Main Street intersection to reflect the proposed roundabout improvements, and adopt the interim funding plan as proposed.

The Commission discussed how long an "interim" fee might be in place, the provisions of a loan and payback from the RDA funds, prioritization of other RTMF projects, and the details of the project cost estimate and possible cost escalations. Executive Director Landon referenced Exhibit 5, which laid out the cash flow plan and how the interim proposal would be incorporated into the current RTMF Update. Tim Kiser said they are looking at the year 2011 to repay a portion of the City's funds, and the remaining of the portion would be repaid in 2020. Executive Director Landon said that the program anticipates a jurisdiction may do a project ahead of the RTMF schedule, and then they are reimbursed for the amount they expended, plus 3% interest at the point it is shown in the Expenditure Plan. He said the money comes from the entire RTMF program, not just from one fee zone, and the progress of other projects in the program are not affected by the funding of this one project.

During the discussion it was noted that NCTC staff is waiting on policy direction from the City of Grass Valley regarding land use for the Special Development Areas (SDAs). In response to questions from the Commissioners as to how long NCTC may need to wait for this information from the City, Joe Heckel, Community Director for the City of Grass Valley, stated that the City has adopted a four-step approach to reaching a determination regarding the SDAs. Mr. Heckel said the

2020 General Plan is the City's policy document. The Economic and Fiscal Condition Study just completed provided very good information on what the City can absorb relative to business park and commercial information. He stated that City staff will work with NCTC on updating their traffic model, and that they can supply information for the development of the model. He said that the four-step process that will lead to Council directives regarding the SDAs would take about sixty days.

Commissioner Ingram expressed concern about waiting for the City to provide policy direction, as it will delay the implementation of the updated fee program. She reiterated the City's request as contained in the resolution and letter from the Mayor and Vice-Mayor. Commissioner Ingram expressed the hope that NCTC would recommend that the City move forward with the allocation of funds currently on hand, accept the request from the City, and make the project a part of the RTMF program.

Commissioner Brady suggested that the Commission might vote to approve the project description and funding methodology, without moving forward with an interim fee program. The Commissioners discussed this suggestion.

Commissioner Brady made a motion to accept the revised project description for the East Main Street/Idaho-Maryland intersection, and the City of Grass Valley's funding methodology that assumes a reimbursable loan from City funds, to be included in the updated RTMF fund. Commissioner Beason seconded the motion, on the condition that the City of Grass Valley will look for funding to cover any cost overruns, or that NCTC will need to find additional funding. Under discussion, Commissioner Ingram asked if, after the vote on this motion, there would be an opportunity to give NCTC staff direction to work with the City of Grass Valley about moving this process forward and completing land use designations so the RTMF can be finalized. The response from the other Commissioners was affirmative to that question. At that point, Chairman Weaver called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Following the vote, Commissioners engaged in a discussion regarding inflation rates and cost escalation on RTMF projects. Commissioner Brady mentioned that the 3% inflation rate used in the past on projects does not work with current conditions of inflation. He questioned Tim Kiser if it would be better to use the Engineers News Record (ENR) regional factor or Caltrans Specific Record. Tim Kiser replied that Grass Valley has the San Francisco Region factor of the ENR Construction Index in their fee program. Commissioner Brady said the inflation factor is not used in the CIPs. Tim Kiser said there are high contingency factors plugged in at the preliminary estimate, and they employ a methodology in the cost estimate that Caltrans uses in their Project Study Reports. Executive Director Landon reported that a 3% inflation factor is used in the RTMF, which is applied to each project. He agreed that this is no longer a valid assumption, so they will go back and look at the ENR and adjust the inflation rate.

During the discussion Executive Director Landon expressed the hope that as a result of the current update of the RTMF program, that NCTC would be able to be given administrative authority to adjust the fee on an annual basis, as long as the adjustments reflected adopted inflation factors. Commissioner Ingram asked for clarification regarding waiting for land use policy directives to come from the City of Grass Valley versus moving ahead using assumptions from the City's 2020 General Plan. She expressed a concern that the development of policy directives for the SDAs may take longer than anticipated.

Lisa Swarthout, Grass Valley City Council member and a member of the audience, suggested that the Commission move forward using the City's 2020 General Plan as a basis. Commissioner Beason

agreed that the General Plan numbers are a good benchmark. Commissioner Ingram noted that the actual development process for the SDAs with the City Council could take years and would be market driven, so her suggestion was to stay with the General Plan numbers and move forward. Ms. Swarthout stated if there has to be changes made to the traffic model and RTMF program that the NCTC uses, the people making the changes would have to pay for the update – in this case, the City of Grass Valley.

Gene Haroldsen, Grass Valley City Administrator and a member of the audience, thanked the Commission for approval of the project description and funding methodology. He expressed concern over not implementing an interim fee, because it would delay the collection of funds to pay for the project. Mr. Haroldsen asked that if the Commission did not approve an interim update to the RTMF program, then to please set a timeline as to when the RTMF would be updated. Commissioner Ingram reminded the Commission that once the RTMF Update is approved by the NCTC, it would need to go through a public review process with the other three jurisdictions. She estimated that a fee update would not be accepted prior to August or September, and that revenues would be lost.

Commissioner Beason noted that there are several things that need to be addressed before an interim update would be considered, including the differential between residential and nonresidential fees. He wants to insure that the RTMF Update is done in a deliberate fashion.

Commissioner Ingram made a motion that an interim fee be adopted for the Idaho-Maryland/East Main intersection, based on the proposed costs, until the NCTC has finalized the RTMF Update. There was no second to the motion. No further discussion was entertained.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Commissioner Beason made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Brady seconded the motion. Chairman Weaver adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Antoinette Perry, Administrative Assistant

Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman Pro Tem  
Nevada County Transportation Commission